

Lesson Two: Social Media and the Job Search

The purpose of this lesson is to create a professional presence on social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter to ensure employers see the best in an individual. The individual will learn what is and what is not appropriate to post, the importance of securing accounts and how to use social media as a job search and networking tool.

STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

North Carolina Essential Standards Guidance

- RED.CR.1 Understand the meaning and importance of career self-awareness and career goals.

North Carolina Professional Career Development Coordinator Standards

- Standard III: Career development coordinators understand and facilitate the implementation of a comprehensive career development program.

North Carolina Essential Standards Grades 9-12, Information and Technology Essential Standards

- HS.TT.1.1 Use appropriate technology tools and other resources to access information (multi-database search engines, online primary resources, virtual interviews with content experts).

NC Community College System College and Career Readiness Adult Content Standards

- S.1 The student will develop and apply skills to demonstrate comprehension and collaboration of oral and aural information.
- T.1 The student will demonstrate knowledge of important issues of a technology-based society and exhibit ethical behaviors related to the use of computers, digital resources, and other technologies.
- T. 6 The student will demonstrate an ability to utilize Internet and other telecommunication resources.

North Carolina Workforce Development Standards

- 20 CFR Parts 676, 677, and 678: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. Programs are based on eligibility.

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

At the close of the lesson, learners will be able to say... I can:

- understand the importance of a professional social media page and my digital footprint.
- use social media to effectively search for jobs and network with other professionals.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Computer with internet access
- Pen/Pencil
- Paper

DELIVERY SUGGESTIONS

Times for delivery will vary depending on group size and learning level.

The following lesson is appropriate for:

- middle school students
- high school students
- adult learners

INSTRUCTIONS

1. State the purpose of session and post within the room for reference (above).
2. Share the **I can** statements and post within the room for reference (above).

You may wish to share the steps below in printed format with job seekers as you walk them through the following:

3. Turn on computer and log on to network if not already accessed.
4. Explain: Social media is websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking. Some social media sites you may be familiar with are Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram. It is important that you understand the things you post on your social media accounts may be viewed by potential employers which may be the difference between getting an interview or not. Some facts (CareerBuilder.com 2012 Survey):

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- a. 2 in 5 employers use social media to screen candidates prior to an interview
- b. 65% of employers check social media to see if job seekers present a professional image
- c. 50% of employers check social media to see if a candidate fits the company culture
- d. 45% use social media to check a person's qualifications

Therefore, it is very important to ensure your social media accounts project a professional image or that you have used the security setting to protect your accounts. But always remember, no security setting is foolproof. You should consider your digital footprint (the information about a particular person that exists on the Internet as a result of their online activity), each time you want to post a status update, picture, article or meme. Ask yourself: What will this say about me?

5. Social media sites can also be a great way of networking. Your online presence can expand your network from 10 to 1000s. If you tell one friend that you are looking for a job, they may tell 10 people. However, if you put the word out on social media, you reach many more people at once thus increasing your chance of finding a job.

6. Networking is important because studies show:

- a. 50% of companies hire based on current employee recommendation
- b. 60% of jobs are found through networking contacts
- c. 70% of jobs are never posted online- employers rely on word of mouth (How to Get a Job and Keep It: Networking, NCWorks Training Center)

7. Popular Social Media Accounts:

Facebook:

- a. Most used site around the world
- b. Easy to maintain a professional appearance and build network
- c. Many also have a personal account that may not be so professional
- d. Ensure strict security settings
 - Restrict your information to friends only
 - Disable tagging so no one can attach unsavory pictures to your accounts
 - Limit access of any friends that you want to prevent from seeing everything
 - Remember: security settings aren't always foolproof so be aware of what you post.

LinkedIn:

- a. Specifically designed for professional business networking
- b. Ability to build and maintain a network of trusted people
- c. Profile pages highlight employment history and education
- d. Includes professional network feeds and skill endorsements
- e. You can set your profile to show you are actively seeking a job to entice employers to learn more about you and hopefully extend an interview if they like what they see
- f. Review job boards to find job postings

Twitter:

- a. Over 3 million users worldwide (2015)
- b. Messages are easily misinterpreted due to short 250-character limit on posts
- c. Use your real identity if using for networking purposes. Follow and retweet appropriate, professional and relevant material. Be careful of the posts you like and re-tweet.
- d. Anonymous accounts can allow for greater freedom
- e. Employers may seek you out based on the quality of your posts

Instagram:

- a. Users can take, edit and share pictures and videos with others
- b. Not recommended for networking purposes unless you are seeking a job where you need to show off a photography portfolio or as a social media consultant/coordinator. Ensure you are posting appropriate material.
- c. Can be linked to other social media sites, but not recommended if you are trying to maintain a professional image
- d. Use security settings to limit access

8. What not to post on your social media accounts:

- a. Pictures of yourself in provocative or inappropriate situations such as criminal activities or lewd situations. Don't post selfies of yourself driving and texting.
- b. Evidence of excessive partying, drinking or illegal drug use.
- c. Negative talk or bad-mouthing previous employers and co-workers.
- d. Bigoted comments related to race, gender, or religion. In fact, it is best to stay away from posts that tend to be marginalizing such as politics or religion.
- e. Posting while working unless it is part of your job description (social media director/advertising).
- f. Complaining about a job or workplace before you even get interviewed or hired.

9. What **to** post on your social media accounts:
 - a. A well-crafted profile that projects positive and professional images
 - b. Posts that are grammatically correct with no spelling errors that show off your creativity, a well-rounded attitude and great communication skills
 - c. Your activity in professional networks and discussion forums
 - d. Industry-related articles
 - e. Expertise as appropriate
10. Explain: The lack of a social media presence can also send signals to potential employers
 - a. You must be hiding something
 - b. You aren't social media or technology savvy
 - c. You have nothing to offer
 - d. You just don't care
11. Next Steps:
 - a. Review the social media accounts you already have. What type of image are you portraying? What do your posts say about you? What do you think a potential employer would think if they saw your profile?
 - b. Ensure your security settings are in place.
 - c. Create a LinkedIn account if you don't already have one. This is the best social media account to have if you are looking for a job. Once you have your profile set up, check to see if anyone you already know is on the site and invite them to your network. Then, search companies that interest you and follow their pages. Finally, look for new individuals to connect with who have the same professional interests, who graduated from the same schools and who work at companies you'd like to work for.

12. To receive formal feedback, share the link below under participant evaluation.
<https://conta.cc/3Cx9sSO>

*Adapted from:

1. **Doug Crawford, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, “Social Media Management: Managing Your Reputation”**. (<https://www.job-applications.com/job-hunting-lesson-plan-06-social-media/>)
2. NC Works Training Center, “How to Get a Job and Keep It: Networking”

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